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SUMMARY RECORD OF THE 25th MEETING

Held at the Palais des Nations, Geneva,
on Friday, 15 May 1992, at 10 a.m.

President: Mr. SENILOLI (Fiji)
later: Mr. ADOUKI (Congo)

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PROGRAMME IMPLEMENTATION:

(a) NATIONAL EXECUTION (continued)

(b) NATIONAL CAPACITY BUILDING (continued)

(d) COORDINATION (continued)

(agenda item 5) (DP/1992/21)

1. Mr. EDGREN (Assistant Administrator and Director, Bureau for Programme Policy and Evaluation) replying to the questions and comments by delegations, said that there was no question of national execution becoming a front for field office or Office of Project Services (OPS) execution. When field offices provided administrative or logistic services, they did so in support of nationally executed projects, and they were reimbursed. OPS was increasingly providing limited and specifically requested services for nationally executed projects and, in so doing, was helping to build up national managerial capacity. When it created an implementation unit, it did so at the request of a Government and on a temporary basis and the unit in question would be incorporated into the national structures within a reasonable period of time. The IPF-funded projects in which OPS performed the role of implementing agency were in the main relatively small, covering a limited range of non-technical services, and were always designed to meet an immediate need.

2. As requested by Germany and the Nordic countries, the Administrator would report in 1993 on the progress of national execution. That progress would again be analysed during the mid-term reviews of the fifth cycle and it might be necessary to undertake a similar evaluation, either in 1994 or at the same time as the review of the support costs successor arrangements. As had been pointed out by the delegations of China and Japan, national capacity building had to be approached differently in different national circumstances. UNDP had accordingly developed, in addition to the preliminary guidelines which would be issued in the second half of 1992, an adaptable conceptual framework which would be used to assess capacity requirements ex ante. A research project had been launched with the World Bank to find better performance indicators of national capacity building.

3. With respect to the programme approach, the concept paper referred to by the Canadian delegation had been distributed to resident representatives, who were engaged in an ongoing discussion with headquarters on methods as well as on matters of substance. In reply to the Japanese delegation's comments, UNDP was more inclined to involve other donors, both multilateral and bilateral, in developing a programme approach, since it was itself a relatively small funding agency. In answer to a question by the United Kingdom delegation, the Programme was ready to involve the specialized agencies in sectoral analyses, in policy reviews and in other "upstream" activities, where the agencies had their particular strengths. With regard to coordination, the fact that UNDP and UNICEF defined national execution differently - a matter referred to by the United States - did not appear to have caused major problems. However,

those differences, which the two organizations were endeavouring to iron out within the JGCP, were very often the result of decisions taken by legislative bodies. Progress was being made on the use of common office premises by all or some of the organizations in the system and all agencies as well as a number of bilateral donors were working to harmonize their rules on accounting and financial reporting. The whole process was moving at a slow speed, but new decisions at the present stage, applicable to UNDP alone, might be a hindrance rather than a help. The Council would in any case be kept informed.

PROGRAMME PLANNING:

(c) SUPPORT COSTS SUCCESSOR ARRANGEMENTS (continued) (agenda item 6) (DP/1992/23 and Add.1)

4. Mr. TAL (Director, Planning and Coordination Office), replying to questions on the support costs successor arrangements, confirmed that the fundamental distinction, as set out in the texts, between the administrative and operational services (AOS) and the technical support services (TSS-1 and TSS-2), was being retained. In regard to the likelihood of confusion between execution and implementation, referred to by the United States delegation, he explained that agencies outside the United Nations system might in fact provide AOS with services but were not always able to isolate the costs of those services from the all-inclusive costs, so that relations with those agencies were comparable to a sub-contract. In regard to the element of selectivity in the choice of TSS-1, UNDP had tried, during the current biennium, to comply with the spirit of the decisions taken by governing bodies, and it had been agreed with the other organizations that preparations for the coming TSS-1 programme would start as from the autumn of 1992 and that the programme would depend entirely on the demand in the field.

5. In reply to the comments by the delegation of Bangladesh on the consultations with Governments, he said that it was inconceivable that a TSS-1 programme should not correspond to the needs of the country in question or that it should be carried out without the consent of its Government. In the case of TSS-2 programmes, there was a requirement in the relevant texts that the Government should be consulted and resident representatives had received instructions to that effect, but the power of decision in the final instance was vested in the Administrator. The position in regard to AOS management by recipient countries was perhaps not entirely clear, but the whole aim of the operation was surely to allow Governments to choose, manage and decide and to provide them with the tools to do so. In the matter of the close consultations with other agencies in order to refine the operational guidelines, UNDP and the main agencies would continue to meet and examine the application and results of the successor arrangements, in order to keep alive, in accordance with the wishes of the Italian delegation, the spirit which had prevailed when the new system was established.

6. In answer to the German delegation, the first draft of the updated guidelines would be available by the end of the year or early next year. In regard to the volume of projects carried out under the new arrangements, the Governing Council had been anxious to ensure a smooth transition from the old to the new system and provision had accordingly been made for projects amounting to a total value of US$ 500 million to be undertaken under the old

system. That figure would in practice be between $560 and $600 million. Very few projects had been approved up to now under the new system, which was being brought into operation with a certain circumspection; that was in accordance with the Council's wishes and should allay the misgivings expressed by the German delegation about the danger of dismantling existing capacity during the transition period. The most relevant indicator was not so much the percentage of projects to be carried out under the new system in 1992-1993, but that of the projects which would be thus approved and implemented during those and subsequent years. According to UNDP, the majority of projects would be implemented under the new system from June onwards and virtually all projects by the end of the year. Only then would it be possible to make an initial assessment of the TSS-2 programmes, as requested by the German delegation.

7. To facilitate the implementation of the new system, a network of staff familiar with the question of support costs had been built up in regional offices, which would be expanded as more workshops were held. The number of support services units had been reduced from eight to seven and the experience acquired would make it possible to determine whether any further reduction was necessary. UNDP also planned to give active encouragement to the system of lump-sum repayments.

8. The United Kingdom delegation had expressed the view that the guidelines were insufficiently precise, whereas other delegations had found them too detailed. In the light of the existing legislation and operational requirements, UNDP and the agencies believed that the guidelines were sound, especially since they could always be amended if necessary. The training programme was behind schedule, but UNDP was making every effort to organize workshops for field office staff, which would be attended also by representatives of other organizations and of the national authorities. The project approval rates for 1992 were very close to the figures for the start of any cycle ($800 million as against $820 million in 1989). The pattern was again very similar from one year to the next ($400 million between October 1990 and March 1991 and $360 million between October 1991 and March 1992).

9. The effect of the TSS-1 mechanism had been to initiate a process of in-depth consultations between UNDP and other agencies, regional bureaux and executing agencies, field offices and headquarters. The aim of the TSS-1 programmes had been to act as the catalyst for upstream activities rather than to satisfy all the demand for activities of that kind. The indicators adopted for evaluation purposes were deemed to be reasonable at the present stage, but evaluation staff, or indeed members of the Council, could propose others. Every effort would be made to synchronize and coordinate the internal evaluation in 1993 and the external evaluation in 1994.

10. Many delegations had expressed their approval of the preferential arrangements concluded with the International Trade Centre. As the Nordic countries wished, those arrangements would be financed within the limits of available resources. With regard to the link between the TSS-1 programmes and country programmes and which the Chinese delegation thought should be an organic link, it was the intention of UNDP, and indeed reflected in the decisions of the deliberative bodies that the activities supported by TSS-1

should not necessarily concern only country programmes. Furthermore, the TSS-1 were programmed over a five-year period, whereas the preparation of country programmes was a matter of one or two years.

11. In conclusion, he recalled that the support costs successor arrangements were the outcome of unprecedented consultations and dialogue with all interested parties, including Governments, at the level of deliberative organs as well as operational systems. The arrangements complied with the principles and policies established by the Council. The spirit of dialogue which had prevailed during the process of formulating them would be maintained. At the present stage, it might be better to take no further decisions on the subject, to allow the system to become operational and to see how it worked, awaiting the initial assessment which would be submitted to the Governing Council in 1993 or 1994.

12. The PRESIDENT said that the Council had concluded its general debate on those agenda items and proposed that the Drafting Group should proceed to prepare a draft decision.

13. It was so decided.

14. Mr. Adouki (Congo) took the Chair.

UNITED NATIONS TECHNICAL COOPERATION ACTIVITIES (agenda item 8) (DP/1992/35 and Add.1-3; DP/1992/36)

15. Mr. KONG (Director, Technical Cooperation Policy Division, Department of Economic and Social Development) said that as a result of recent steps taken by the Secretary-General and endorsed by the General Assembly for the restructuring of the United Nations Secretariat, various administrative bodies dealing with economic and social matters had been regrouped and placed under the new Department of Economic and Social Development, in order to maximize the impact of the United Nations in the field of economic and social development. That restructuring exercise was of major significance for the technical cooperation activities of the United Nations, it strengthened that Department's capacity by enlarging its substantive competence in various fields, integrating analytical research and operational activities in one department and giving high-level attention by special coordinators to important cross-sectoral issues.

16. As indicated in document DP/1992/35, the former Department of Technical Cooperation for Development had been active in a number of major cross-sectoral issues in 1991; those activities would, of course, be continued by the new Department. The Department had responded to priorities laid down by the General Assembly in resolution 44/211 and several of the main decisions taken by the UNDP Governing Council, in particular decisions 91/32 and 91/27. In that connection, it had laid particular emphasis on building national capacities to develop self-reliance among the developing countries and had also provided full support to national execution by providing training facilities. Within the context of its numerous sectoral mandates, the Department had also given special attention to several new initiatives.

17. Specifically, the Department of Technical Cooperation for Development had in 1991 allocated $182 million to approximately 1,000 projects, in which it had emphasized human resources development. In addition to training, it had provided advisory services to developing countries in a number of fields. Generally speaking, it had tried to follow a multidisciplinary and integrated approach, in keeping with its competence in various sectors: statistics, population, development planning, natural resources development, economic and administrative management and the environment. High priority had also been given to the least developed countries and the countries in Africa, in particular in developing institutional capacities to enable them to undertake policy analyses and programme implementation effectively. The Department's experts had worked with their national partners in a number of varied activities.

18. Concerning relations with UNDP, he noted that the Administrator, in view of the restructuring of the United Nations in the economic and social sectors, had decided that it would be appropriate to defer consideration of that matter until the new structure became fully operational. He hoped that the Department of Economic and Social Cooperation would continue to work closely with UNDP. Their cooperation would in future be based on the principle of a tripartite relationship and the new modalities of technical cooperation. The strengthening of national execution by no means decreased the importance of the support provided by the United Nations system, and it was of the utmost importance that the capacities of the United Nations system should be utilized in the most productive manner. The various components of the system should be distinct but complementary, and there should be no overlapping of functions or duplication of capacity.

19. Mr. WIBISONO (Indonesia) noted with satisfaction the documents on United Nations technical cooperation activities, which emphasized the significance of those activities for the development of the third world countries. UNDP technical assistance had been instrumental in Indonesia's economic and social development programmes. UNDP should be aware of the need to develop new ways to address the problems facing developing countries in pragmatic terms, since external cooperation priorities were firmly rooted in national development objectives. Thus, in keeping with General Assembly resolutions 44/211 and 46/219, UNDP should continue to give priority to national execution of the projects it financed or assisted, while considering the appropriateness of such an approach for each project.

20. Indonesia was convinced that the development of an individual country was ultimately the responsibility of its people and Government. In a world of rapidly-growing interdependence, however, no nation could successfully carry out its development programmes in isolation from world economic disturbances. Each must develop its own potential as much as possible, through North-South cooperation on the one hand, and cooperation among developing countries on the other. The Government of Indonesia acknowledged the important role of TCDC and had itself participated in a number of such programmes, in which it had given priority to the needs of the least developed countries. In that regard, UNDP should take the lead in overcoming the problems impeding the expansion of TCDC. The international community should also take the necessary measures to implement the commitments agreed on in the context of TCDC. His delegation

was also encouraged by the progress of the project for a development information network to facilitate the flow of information among developing countries. It was also pleased to note the strong UNDP commitment to assist African countries, as evidenced by the expanded UNDP assistance to LDCs in various sectors.

21. His delegation deemed it necessary for UNDP to review progress on technical assistance activities following the restructuring of the Secretariat. The restructuring process should in no way curtail UNDP technical assistance capability, but should even further enhance the United Nations capability to meet the needs of the developing countries. Indonesia believed that the study on options for closer cooperation between the former Department of Technical Cooperation for Development and UNDP remained highly relevant and could still be utilized to accommodate the concerns of member States. With a few adjustments, it could help to overcome any overlapping of activities and possible waste of resources. UNDP should also determine whether the programmes previously within the scope of the Department of Technical Cooperation for Development could still be completely and effectively implemented, as originally intended, or whether the restructuring had had an adverse effect.

22. Mr. MARKER (Denmark), speaking on behalf of the Nordic countries, agreed that it was difficult to discuss the subject of closer cooperation between UNDP and the Department of Economic and Social Development as long as the restructuring had not been concluded. He would like, however, to note that due to similarities in mandates and tasks, the Nordic countries had for years encouraged closer cooperation between the Office for Project Services (OPS) and the former Department of Technical Cooperation for Development, in order to ensure a more effective division of labour, reduce costs and eliminate duplication of activities. The Nordic United Nations Project went a step further by proposing to incorporate the Department of Technical Cooperation for Development into OPS.

23. He welcomed the fact that UNDP had commissioned two well-qualified consultants to prepare the report on closer cooperation between DTCD and UNDP. It was clear from the report that the two units had overlapping mandates: in that respect, the Nordic countries believed that the Secretariat should as a matter of principle not engage in operational activities, and they would therefore object to proposals to move OPS to the Secretariat. In their view, the Secretariat should focus on normative activities, and operational activities should be left to the organs specially designed and equipped for those tasks. The Nordic countries understood the difficulties that the consultants had in making radical proposals to solve existing problems, which needed to be looked at in the broader framework of the restructuring of the United Nations development system. There was growing recognition of the need for changes in that area, and institutional inertia and vested interests no longer appeared to stand in the way of a rational solution. The Nordic countries would continue to keep the issue in mind and would request the Administrator and the Under-Secretary-General for Economic and Social Development to continue their consultations on streamlining the cooperation

between the two units, taking the consultants' proposals into consideration. The Administrator should report to the following session of the Council on that issue, once the restructuring of the Department for Economic and Social Development was completed.

24. Mr. BROUWERS (Netherlands) said that his delegation had noted with interest the report of the consultants on closer cooperation between the former Department of Technical Cooperation for Development and UNDP and noted that at the Council's previous session, general concern had been expressed about the need for a more effective division of labour between the two bodies, avoidance of duplication in administrative support activities and stronger technical support activities. The consultants noted that OPS, which had been established to take action in those areas where no other United Nations expertise was available, was now structured on a geographical basis, which reflected its actions in the field. In their opinion, OPS was much closer to project allocation than the Department and other organizations, thanks to the powers of direction and control that the resident representatives seemed to have. Regarding duplication within the United Nations system, the report was not very explicit, except with regard to the Management Development Programme, where the impact of OPS was considerable although that field of activities was clearly within the mandate of the Department. Regarding procurement, the report refrained from suggesting any institutional amalgamation, while recommending the use of a single database without specifying what would happen to the Inter-Agency Procurement Services Office and the UNIPAC Purchasing and Distribution Centre. Furthermore, stronger collaboration between the Department and UNDP with regard to fellowships was mentioned as deserving more attention.

25. His delegation believed that the consultants' report was a useful contribution to the discussion on the reform of the United Nations, and it endorsed certain of its practical suggestions, such as the participation by the Department in the Projects Acceptance Committee of OPS, the attachment of the United Nations Revolving Fund for Natural Resources Exploration to the Department, the establishment of one procurement database, the integration of the units distributing fellowships and consideration of the delegation by the Secretariat of financial and administrative responsibilities to the Department.

26. He stressed that his delegation was particularly interested in the follow-up of the Programme of Action for the LDCs for the 1990s and that, at recent consultations between his country's authorities and UNCTAD representatives, the question of Netherlands financing under that programme had been considered positively. However, considering the difficulties that UNCTAD appeared to be facing in funding appropriate activities at the country level, it might be advisable to consider activities at the regional level: he would appreciate the comments of the Coordinator of Assistance to the LDCs in that respect. The participation of the LDCs in the process of reforming and revitalizing UNCTAD was another point of interest to his delegation. During UNCTAD VIII, the LDCs had requested that attention should be paid to ways of funding that participation. The option of additional funding seemed far less attractive than financing from IPF sources: the Administrator's view on that question would also be welcome.

27. Mr. SUN Jie (China) noted that the total value of the projects carried out in 1991 by the former Department of Technical Cooperation for Development had been approximately $182 million, slightly higher than during the previous year. His delegation was gratified that it had continued to help the developing countries to carry out their projects and to promote TCDC in such areas as natural resources and energy, public administration and finance. It approved the reform of the Secretariat undertaken by the Secretary-General and which it hoped would allow the new Department of Economic and Social Development to draw maximum benefit from the assets within its constituent parts, to enhance coordination and to avert duplication, thus helping to give a new impetus to United Nations technical cooperation activities.

28. His delegation believed that the tripartite cooperation between UNDP, the specialized agencies and Governments remained the cornerstone of United Nations technical cooperation. One of the problems faced by most developing countries was the lack of technical skills and of experts, an area in which the specialized agencies could provide them with help. They had shown their value in recent years, in spite of changes in programming (method of programme delivery and the programme approach). Needless to say, they should adjust their internal structures to that evolution.

29. Like other developing countries, China appreciated the technical cooperation activities of the United Nations system which enabled the developing countries to enhance their capacity for national execution and to become more self-reliant. It hoped that the new Department of Economic and Social Development and the other United Nations agencies would increase their efficiency and continue to provide their technical support to the developing countries.

30. Mr. SOUTTER (Canada) expressed satisfaction at the recent merging of various United Nations activities within the Department of Economic and Social Development. In the view of his Government, the change represented a logical streamlining and integration of certain components of the United Nations Development System.

31. He noted that Mr. Kong had focused his remarks on his Department's technical activities. However, Canada considered that the Department had above all a role to play at a higher level, whether in respect of standard-setting, monitoring, coordination, policy design, and even at a later stage, system-wide management functions. His delegation was concerned that the importance attached by the Department of Economic and Social Development to project delivery might in the long term prove incompatible with that broader role. While the number of development agencies actually required by the United Nations was open to debate, there was no doubt that they needed to develop their activities in the sphere of overall policy and management.

32. He endorsed the views expressed earlier by the Danish delegation regarding the rationalization of mandates and the possible transfer of the operational activities of the Department of Economic and Social Development to other United Nations bodies. Valuable structural changes had undoubtedly been made in that direction, although more details on the Department's long-term strategy and plans would be appreciated when the time came.

33. Mr. SHEIKH (Pakistan) welcomed the restructuring of technical cooperation activities and expressed appreciation of the role played by the United Nations system in that field. Macroeconomic trends unfavourable for the countries of the third world and shrinking resources made it necessary to adopt new approaches in technical cooperation. The developing countries were at varying levels of development and greater flexibility and attention to evolving needs were required, without compromising the basic principles currently in force. Specific measures ought to be adopted for the recruitment of personnel responsible for technical assistance projects in order to make better use of the skills available in the developing countries.

34. TCDC was a good way of mobilizing greater human resources on behalf of development. The global environment had underscored the importance of cooperation among developing countries, as a means of strengthening their collective self-reliance, thus reducing their vulnerability and increasing their capacity to contribute to global prosperity. UNDP should intensify its efforts in that respect towards the low-income countries.

35. Pakistan had taken part in all the TCDC programming exercises. In 1988, in cooperation with UNDP it had organized a major programming exercise in the area of industry and science and would carry out an exercise in civil air transport in August 1992. Most developing countries encountered difficulties in meeting their share of the costs of TCDC projects from their IPFs, and it would be desirable for UNDP to provide them with additional resources for that purpose.

36. Mr. Breitenstein (Finland) resumed the Chair.

37. Mr. DEMONGEOT (United States of America) drew attention to the need to consider relations between the Department of Economic and Social Development and UNDP within the broader context of the overall restructuring of operational activities for development. It would be necessary to take a very close look at their respective roles, in particular, with regard to coordination at the country level and their relations with resident coordinators, taking due account of comparative advantages. Transferring purely technical functions to UNDP would be tantamount to turning it into a kind of specialized agency.

38. Mr. MORALES (Cuba) said that he hoped that the new Department would provide countries with a complete range of services and more efficient technical assistance than in the past.

39. Mr. MACHIN (United Kingdom) stressed the obvious importance of the task of the Department of Economic and Social Development and said that he too believed that it would be necessary to consider its activities against the broader background of the restructuring of the United Nations system. UNDP needed fully to reidentify its key role in technical assistance matters within the system. In order to do so, it should clearly define its responsibilities in relation to those of the Department and of other organizations, such as the World Bank. Lastly, it was obvious that the Department would need to undertake effective projects.

40. Mr. GOMEZ (Associate Administrator, UNDP) replying to the questions raised with UNDP, first of all pointed out that the report by the consultants was in some respects out of date, because the circumstances had indeed changed, a fact that was ground for satisfaction. He would be prepared to follow up the proposal concerning the submission of a further report in 1992. He also confirmed that all future measures would be implemented as part of the broader restructuring undertaken by the Secretary-General. Lastly, regarding the need to take comparative advantages fully into account, he assured delegations that UNDP would continue its efforts in that direction.

PROGRAMME-LEVEL ACTIVITIES

(a) ENVIRONMENT (agenda item 3) (DP/1992/14)

41. Mr. EDGREN (Associate Administrator, UNDP) said that the main purpose of the report before the Council was to inform it of the actions taken to make UNDP more responsive to the increasing needs of developing countries in the area of sustainable development and to outline a programme in support of UNCED and Agenda 21, with whose preparatory process UNDP had been closely linked. The fact that over 80 per cent of the country programmes proposed for the fifth cycle featured the environment as one of the main themes, coupled with UNDP's increasing involvement in "upstream" policy advice would facilitate its task of helping developing countries to integrate their environmental and development activities.

42. Its interdisciplinary and intersectoral mandate placed UNDP in a unique position to assist developing countries formulate sustainable development strategies. It would focus on building their capacities for sustainable development and on mobilizing the resources needed for implementing new programmes to be undertaken in accordance with Agenda 21 and the global environmental conventions. After the Conference the Administrator intended to review the measures adopted or proposed to enhance the Programme's capacity in that area.

43. UNDP would focus on building partnerships between the public and private sectors to facilitate cooperation and the transfer of environmentally-sound technologies. It would also give particular attention to the role that important groups such as women and NGOs should play in environmental decision-making and it would help the developing countries to facilitate the participation of all sectors of society in environmental management and in the implementation of sustainable development strategies.

44. UNDP also intended to play a major role in the management of the Global Environment Facility in order to ensure that projects funded by it were closely linked to national development plans and strategies and it also sought to improve its cooperation with financial institutions.

45. Mr. BARREIROS (Portugal), speaking on behalf of the European Community and its member States, said that the environment had for some time been a priority for the Community within the framework of its cooperation for development and that the linkages between environment and that in more recent years development had also been at the forefront of its concerns. At their meeting in Brussels on 5 May, the Community officials responsible for

development and the environment had reaffirmed their commitment to contribute to the successful outcome of UNCED. They had also drawn attention to the need to increase substantially assistance to the developing countries in the field of technology transfer and national capacity-building, and had advocated the allocation of the necessary funds to UNDP to allow it to make full use of its network of field offices, its broad mandate and experience in technical cooperation matters so as to facilitate national capacity-building.

46. As far as the six areas on which the Council had requested UNDP to focus its efforts were concerned, it was vital, in view of the environmental problems and problems of natural resource management, not to neglect the issue of population growth. With regard to the strategy followed by UNDP, its fourth component - strengthening field and headquarters capacities - should be seen against the background of the reform of the system and the rationalization of UNDP's activities. The Community looked forward to the report due to be submitted in 1993 on that question. It also considered that the Global Environment Facility should serve as the appropriate multilateral mechanism to provide new and additional financial resources on concessional terms to cover the agreed incremental costs for achieving agreed global environmental benefits.

47. The Community and its member States commended UNDP for the assistance it had provided to the developing countries in preparing for the Rio Summit and urged it to make full use of its field network and experience to follow up the Summit. It noted with satisfaction the reaffirmation of the need for close cooperation with UNEP. It had frequently stressed the need to strengthen UNEP further so that it could better fulfil the tasks with which it would be entrusted by the Conference. Lastly, it welcomed the conclusion of the work on climate change and believed that the draft framework convention that had been drawn up was a step forward towards the protection of the environment.

48. Mrs. DOWSETT (New Zealand) congratulated UNDP on the measures adopted by it to meet the growing needs of the developing countries in respect of sustainable development and for the valuable support it had provided to the South Pacific region in the preparation of UNCED. UNDP had in particular worked closely with the regional organizations and Governments concerned to prepare the report on Pacific island developing countries.

49. If the Programme was to continue to play a leading role in promoting sustainable development, it had to redouble its efforts. Its contribution to the follow-up of the Conference was vital and it should first of all strive vigorously to build national capacity. For example, in the South Pacific region, despite their determination to promote environmentally-sound development, Governments did not always possess the necessary institutional framework or the human and financial resources to do so. Accordingly, UNDP's intention to tackle that long-term task and to involve major sectors of the population in it was a welcome development, and it was to be hoped that the Programme would continue closely to cooperate with regional organizations.

50. UNDP should also play a more significant role in managing the Global Environment Facility and ensure that projects financed by it took into account the needs of the developing countries. Her delegation also stressed the need for the Facility's composition to be universal.

51. In order to be able to contribute to the follow-up of UNCED, UNDP would need to reinforce its personnel and resources and to incorporate ecological considerations into all its activities. Her delegation unreservedly supported the proposal for an overall review of UNDP's internal capacity.

52. Mr. SOUTTER (Canada) said that although his delegation supported the directions set out in document DP/1992/14, which delineated a useful and realistic role for UNDP, it wished to indicate some points of concern. First of all, his delegation was not at all convinced that the self-assigned fund-raising role referred to in paragraph 17 (b) was either appropriate or within UNDP's mandate; a coordination role would seem more suitable. Secondly, as the demarcation of responsibilities between UNDP and UNEP was unclear, it was essential for the two organizations to meet in order to draft a clear and acceptable agreement on that issue. Lastly UNDP should not content itself with cooperating with United Nations agencies and regional development banks, but it should also seek the assistance of national, regional and international institutions, bilateral agencies, NGOs, private companies, etc.

53. Mr. KOIKE (Japan) said that Japan was actively involved in the preparations for UNCED and considered that the existing machinery should be fully utilized in order to ensure that the new measures that would be taken did not lead to duplication.

54. In conjunction with UNEP, UNDP would have an essential and twofold role to play in the sphere of the environment and development. At the global level, it was one of the three organizations responsible for the management of the Global Environment Facility. At the national and regional levels it would be expected to assist environmental programmes and integrate ecological considerations into development programmes and projects. Its field network needed to be fully geared to that endeavour. In particular, it should continue to promote national capacity-building in the developing countries. His delegation looked forward to discussing ways and means of strengthening UNDP's capabilities in the light of the outcome of the Conference.

55. Mr. BLANK (Germany) associated himself first of all, with the statement by the representative of Portugal on behalf of the European Community, adding that it was important to lay greater emphasis on the link between the environment and development in all UNDP's programmes as well as on its role in the follow-up process to the Rio Conference. That was particularly true as far as capacity-building and the key issues of Agenda 21 were concerned. Since the environmental priorities of industrial and developing countries sometimes differed, UNDP could assist in identifying areas of mutual interest, its decentralizing structure enhancing the participative approach advocated in Agenda 21.

56. Germany appreciated UNDP's valuable contribution to the Global Environmental Facility and considered that it should pursue its constructive cooperation with the World Bank and UNEP. It also appreciated the role UNDP was playing in coordinating donor activities. It stressed that the facility should concentrate on financing the incremental costs of measures with global significance, although it was clear that those targets could only be reached through measures at the national or regional levels.

57. Germany also welcomed the fact that mention had been made in the Administrator's report of the need for the integration of all activities in order to enhance their efficiency. As for UNDP's activities in support of Agenda 21, the question of which institution would be best able to take the lead in the coordination of external support and to facilitate national efforts with a view to integrating all relevant participants in the process to develop national strategies for sustainable development should be decided on a case-by-case basis. Such strategies should identify key problems rapidly so that action could be taken immediately that would be preferable to comprehensive plans, which might never be implemented due to deficient administrative structures or political situations.

58. Lastly, with regard to national capacity-building, the report seemed to lay too much emphasis on policy formulation, the legal framework and strengthening of public institutions and glossed over support for developing countries in evaluating the environmental costs of their policies, the cost-effectiveness of the different types of action and the application of market-oriented instruments. As in general the administrative capacities of those countries were quite weak, the greater use of market-oriented instruments might prove far more effective.

59. Mr. SHEIKH (Pakistan) welcomed the establishment of the Global Environment Facility and expressed the hope that UNDP would have more substantial resources at its disposal in order to be able to assist developing countries in implementing their environmental protection programmes. Pakistan had been one of the first developing countries to devise a global national strategy for sustainable development taking into account environmental protection, and had included it in its five-year plan for 1993-1998. The strategy dealt with the protection of water resources and forests as well as air pollution, and the link between population growth and the environment. However, in order to ensure its implementation, the existing machinery would need to be significantly improved and, UNDP's assistance would be welcome in that connection.

60. Mr. HJELMAKER (Observer for Sweden), speaking on behalf of the Nordic countries, after recalling the link between environmental protection and sustainable development, stressed the need for the industrial countries to devote at least 0.7 per cent of their GNP to Official Development Assistance and to provide new financial resources, which would assist developing countries in coping with global environmental problems.

61. The Nordic countries endorsed the Administrator's report (DP/1992/14). Since the outcome of UNCED was not entirely clear, it was difficult to give a precise definition of UNDP's role in the follow-up process; nonetheless, some comments could be made. First, all the United Nations agencies should participate actively in the implementation of Agenda 21 in their respective fields of competence. Second, UNDP should act as lead agency in the efforts by the United Nations system towards capacity-building at local, national and regional levels. Third, serving as resident coordinators, the UNDP resident representatives would have a crucial role to play in the follow-up to UNCED. They should also assist developing countries in identifying their special needs and preparing national plans for sustainable development.

Fourth, the Nordic countries welcomed UNDP's goal to incorporate environmental concerns in all its development programmes. However, UNDP capacity must be strengthened in order to take on the new challenge. Fifth, the Global Environment Facility administration would need to be enhanced within the participating agencies. With the World Bank already strengthening its capacities in that regard, UNDP should be seen to be a more active partner.

62. The Nordic countries would appreciate further details as to how UNDP planned to organize such a substantial programme. For instance, what changes would be made at headquarters and in field offices? As for the mandate of the Global Environment Facility, they had expressed their views on the matter during a participants' meeting held two weeks earlier. Lastly, they considered that UNDP's role in the follow-up to UNCED should be placed on the agenda for the special session of the Governing Council, scheduled for February 1993.

63. Mr. SHARMAN (India) thanked the Administrator for his very comprehensive report on environment and development, which highlighted in particular the need to examine all programmes and projects from the environmental standpoint. One of the functions of UNDP was to assist developing countries in selecting technology which was not harmful to the environment and to encourage Economic Cooperation among Developing Countries (ECDC) in the sphere of environmental protection. That was an area in which India was already very active, as demonstrated by its national action plan for the environment.

64. Mrs. DIOP (Observer for Senegal) welcomed UNDP assistance to the least developed countries, including the African countries, to enable them to take part in preparations for UNCED. She also welcomed the crucial role which UNDP could play in connection with Agenda 21, principally by supporting national capacity-building. The Administrator was also to be congratulated on highlighting the vital role of women in the environment. However, it was a pity that a mere four lines had been devoted to drought and desertification, which were known to be having disastrous effects in some countries, especially in southern Africa. Greater emphasis should be laid on strengthening subregional capacities and providing an evaluation system for the follow-up to Agenda 21.

65. Mr. ALOM (Observer for Bangladesh) commended the Administrator's report and the role played by UNDP in the highly technical area of environment and development. His Government attached great importance to environmental protection, an aspect which as of now formed part of its national economic development plans.

66. Bangladesh hoped that UNCED would assist the least-developed countries in their efforts to achieve sustainable development and environmental protection. Such efforts should aim to prevent land, water and air pollution, encourage activities which were not damaging to the environment, preserve natural resources at national, regional and world levels and strengthen capacities in the public and private sectors with a view to ensuring sustainable development. The Bangladeshi Government had taken a number of

steps in the area, inter alia to bring its legislation more into line with current needs. It would be glad to benefit from the Global Environment Facility, which would enable it to undertake priority activities relating to environmental protection.

67. Mrs. CORVALAN (Observer for Chile) endorsed the proposals contained in the Administrator's report (DP/1992/14). Chile was experiencing environmental damage, combined with poverty among sizeable sectors of the population and inadequate managerial capacity. International cooperation and, above all, the assistance UNDP could provide as a coordinating body, were of capital importance.

68. Along with democratization, social development and modernization of the means of production, Chile had made environmental protection one of the main concerns in its five-year plan. She hoped that, in 1993, the Governing Council would be sure to take stock of such matters as the consideration given to the concerns and know-how of indigenous communities, and the role of women in the environment.

69. Mrs. DUDIK-GAYOSO (United States of America) said that UNDP must strengthen its capacity in order to ensure that its development programmes were environmentally sound. While supporting UNDP's efforts to promote sustainable development, her delegation urged rapid implementation of the findings of the 1991 Joint Inspection Unit report on the United Nations agencies' involvement in environmental protection activities. Specifically, UNDP needed to increase its coordination with the specialized agencies and UNEP, create an advisory mechanism for environmental management and sustainable development activities, give greater emphasis to an environmental background in the personnel selection process and provide training for existing staff. A timetable should be established for those actions.

70. The Administrator's report spelt out an appropriate programme of action for the implementation of Agenda 21. Some programmes priorities might need to be reviewed. Furthermore, it would be useful for UNDP to consider in 1993 how its programmes fitted in with the conclusions of UNCED. UNDP should participate actively, using existing resources, in the work of the Administrative Committee on Coordination, which was to be set up after the Conference.

71. As the Joint Inspection Unit had observed in 1991, UNDP tended to spread itself too broadly and thinly in its environment-related activities. It should remedy that shortcoming without further delay by, inter alia, devoting a larger part of its resources to environmental protection, and providing member States and other United Nations bodies with statistical information on the strengthening of institutional infrastructure, training and research development. She strongly encouraged UNDP to revise the technical information contained in its Handbook and Guidelines for Environmental Management and Sustainable Development.

72. It would also be useful to establish some kind of advisory board for the preparation of environmental management and sustainable development activities, which should be fully in line with the mechanisms set up following

UNCED. Lastly, her delegation applauded UNDP's intention to train national officials and project personnel in 30 developing countries, and recommended that UNDP attach greater importance to providing its staff with environmental training.

73. Mrs. SANTOS POMPEU (Observer for Brazil) underlined the fact that the Governing Council should not prejudge the decisions which would be taken in Rio de Janeiro, although it was clear that UNDP would play a key role in the implementation of UNCED decisions. As the representative of Sweden had remarked, in any case, Council would have to await the outcome of the Conference.

74. Mr. EDGREN (Assistant Administrator, UNDP) expressed appreciation of the valuable comments made at a time when UNDP was preparing to implement decisions which would be taken at UNCED as well as its Agenda 21 programme. It would be useful if the Council's support was reflected by a decision to which the UNDP delegation could refer at Rio de Janeiro.

75. He welcomed Japan's proposal to look into ways of strengthening UNDP's capacities after the Conference. In 1993, the Administrator would submit a report on the situation and on the activities planned for the implementation of Agenda 21 on a number of important issues, including, UNDP staff training, the method envisaged for incorporating environmental concerns in all UNDP activities and cooperation among institutions that specialized in that area. In that connection, he recalled that talks with UNEP were under way, in which the other agencies concerned should be subsequently involved. Replying to the remarks by the observer from Senegal, he pointed out that the United Nations Sudano-Sahelian Office was focusing all its activities on desertification control and was also supporting several subregional bodies.

76. The PRESIDENT took it that, if there were no objections, he would take it that the Council wished the Drafting Group to start preparing a draft decision on the question.

77. It was so decided.

The meeting rose at 1 p.m.